

REMARKS

In response to the final Office Action mailed November 16, 2004, the period for response having been extended to May 16, 2005 by a Petition for a Three-Month Extension of time and fee filed herewith, Applicant has amended the claims and provides the following remarks. **Please do not enter the Amendment After Final filed February 15, 2005.**

Initially, Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claim 25 is allowable. Independent claims 18 and 29 have been amended and claim 26 has been canceled. Claim 30 has been added. Claims 27 and 28 have been amended to depend from new claim 30. Claims 18-25 and 27-30 remain pending.

Claims 18-14 and 26-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Goddard in view of Manuli.

Although Applicant disagrees with the Examiner's assertion that Manuli's collar 6 or 25 teaches or suggests an annular reinforcing band as previously claimed, Applicant has amended the claims to expedite prosecution in this matter. The claims are allowable over the art of record, including Manuli. Even if Manuli's collar were considered, as the Examiner suggests, to be an annular reinforcing band, the collar does not have a width or placement as claimed, but rather extends over the entire area of a coupling. Further, Manuli's collar does not comprise one of tape, an adhesive layer, and a suitable coating such that the corrugated pipe, which normally exhibits viscoelastic characteristics when subjected to a predetermined level of interior pressure, is precluded from expanding outwardly at the site of the sealing element.


In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this paper and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: May 16, 2005

By: 
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